

THE ELEVATION OF THE PANAGHIA

JOHN J. YIANNIAS



THE Elevation of the Panaghia (ὑψωσις τῆς παναγίας) came to my attention when I was investigating Eastern refectory practice in preparation for a study of the wall paintings in the trapeza of the Great Lavra on Mount Athos.¹ Remarkably little has been written about the Elevation of the Panaghia, aside from some short seventeenth-century commentaries and a brief, though helpful, discussion by Von der Goltz. Yet the rite is an intriguing one, of potential interest for theologians and art historians alike. The purpose of this article is to present some of the requisite material for a more ambitious study of the rite.

By “Elevation of the Panaghia” is meant, here as in the original sources, the elevation, on the fingertips, of a loaf of bread or a piece thereof, called in both cases either a Panaghia (παναγία) or—although the term is ambiguous—an ὑψωμα. Two or three exclamations ordinarily accompany this act, the first extolling the Trinity, the second imploring the Virgin for aid, and the third calling for God’s help through the Virgin’s intercession. The first usually consists of the words, Μέγα τὸ ὄνομα τῆς ἁγίας τριάδος, although in one source, as we shall see, it is given as, Μέγα τὸ ὄνομα τῆς ὁμοουσίου καὶ ἀδιαιρέτου τριάδος. The invocation of the Virgin customarily takes the form of, Παναγία θεοτόκε βοήθει ἡμῖν, although one source prescribes, Παναγία, δέσποινα, θεοτόκε βοήθει τῷ δούλῳ σου τῷ δεῖνι. To this invocation is sometimes added the third, Ταῖς αὐτῆς πρεσβείαις ὁ θεὸς ἐλέησον καὶ σῶσον ἡμᾶς. There is some indication in the sources that this ritual—the elevation of the bread and the two or three exclamations—can stand alone, but in common practice it is part of a ceremonial augmented by additional prayers. These prayers vary with the occasions upon which the Elevation is performed.

Before we consider what these occasions are, some observations are in order about the word “Panaghia” and the piece of bread to which it refers. This epithet of the Virgin is applied to one of the particles cut from a loaf of oblation during the office of the Prothesis.² The practice today is to cut a piece which is pyramidal, with a triangular base. Also, as the Elevation of the Panaghia is performed today, the loaf from which the Panaghia is cut is sometimes the same as that from which the Lamb (ἀμνός) is excised, while at other times it is a separate loaf. In either case, it is this Panaghia, or the loaf from which the Panaghia

¹ “The Wall Paintings in the Trapeza of the Great Lavra on Mount Athos: A Study in Eastern Orthodox Refectory Art,” a dissertation submitted to the University of Pittsburgh in 1971. I thank Professor George Stričević for the ideas which he once expressed to me concerning the Elevation of the Panaghia.

² The word παναγία apparently came to the attention of Western scholars only with the publication of Pseudo-Codinus’ *Περὶ τῶν ὁφικιαλίων* (*De officiis*) in the late sixteenth century. Du Jon and De Meurs knew that Pseudo-Codinus was using παναγία, in his description of the Elevation of the Panaghia, to refer to a piece of bread, but they guessed incorrectly at the word’s derivation. Their interpretation was corrected by Jacob Gretser, whose comments relative to the Elevation, together with those made by Jacques Goar in *his* edition of the *Περὶ τῶν ὁφικιαλίων* (which appeared in 1648), were published in the Bonn edition of 1839 (pp. 298–300).

is cut, that is used in the Elevation of the Panaghia, except when no prosphora is available. In the latter instance, as we shall see, virtually any object may be elevated in the place of bread.

It is difficult to say when the practice began of cutting the particle of the Panaghia in the shape of a three-sided pyramid. Not until the early fifteenth century do we find this shape documented in association with the Virgin. In his *Περὶ Θείας προσευχῆς*, Symeon of Thessalonica (d. 1429) wrote that the Panaghia symbolizes the substantial unity of the Three Persons of the Trinity, because, on whichever of its faces one may place the particle, it describes a triangle with its base and rises to a single apex. But he added that, although the Panaghia is dedicated to the Trinity, the dedication is *in the name of* the Theotokos, since "it was by her holy act of giving birth that we came to know the Trinity."³

The Elevation of the Panaghia is suited theoretically to any number of occasions. Symeon of Thessalonica wrote that it could be performed whenever one wished to invoke divine aid.⁴ This general rule aside, the specific times mentioned in the sources occur during the Divine Liturgy and after three different meals, namely, the meal preceding the commencement of a journey, the repast in the imperial dining hall, and the meal in the monastic refectory.

I shall take each of these instances in turn and describe the Elevation as it appears in the sources relating to each. The sources which I shall use range in date from the tenth century to the eighteenth. In the late seventh- or early eighth-century *Ἱστορία ἐκκλησιαστική*, sometimes attributed to Patriarch Germanos I (d. 733), we find expressed the idea that the oblatory loaf from which the Lamb is taken symbolizes the virginal body of Mary, but the author makes no mention of a ritual elevation of the loaf.⁵ To my knowledge, the oldest source containing explicit reference to the Elevation of the Panaghia is a tenth-century euchologion, the Cod. Cryptoferratensis Γ.β. VII, quoted by Goar in his euchologion of 1647.⁶ The next oldest appears to be Cod. E.M.6 in the Badische Landesbibliothek at Karlsruhe, dating to around 1200.⁷ The *Περὶ τῶν ὀφφικιαλίων* of Pseudo-Codinus, written between 1347 and 1368, is third,⁸ followed by the *Περὶ Θείας προσευχῆς* of Symeon of Thessalonica, already cited. The sixteenth century furnishes us with several sources: a Florentine horologion which, although published in 1520, is a pirated edition of a horologion printed in Venice in 1509; MS H15 of the Great Lavra, another horologion, penned in 1556; MS K34 of the Great Lavra, entitled *Ἐπιστολικοὶ τύποι* but actually composed of a number of heterogeneous texts; and Katholikon 81 of the Great Lavra, a liturgical ty-

³ Migne, PG, CLV, 664. Although triangles appear on bread stamps that may go back to the sixth century (see George Galavaris, *Bread and the Liturgy: The Symbolism of Early Christian and Byzantine Bread Stamps* [Madison, Wis.,—London, 1970], 32), there is no indication that these triangles were in any way symbolic of the Virgin.

⁴ Migne, PG, CLV, 661, 664.

⁵ Migne, PG, XCVIII, 397, 452–453.

⁶ J. Goar, *Εὐχολόγιον sive rituale graecorum*, 2d ed. (Venice, 1730), 680–1 (865–7 in the Paris edition of 1647).

⁷ Richard Engdahl, *Beiträge zur Kenntniss der byzantinischen Liturgie, Texte und Studien* (1908), 78–82.

⁸ (Pseudo-Codinus,) *Traité des Offices*, ed. J. Verpeaux (Paris, 1966), 204.

pikon.⁹ Also dating to the sixteenth century, in all likelihood, or possibly to the seventeenth, is a liturgical typikon quoted by Goar in his euchologion.¹⁰ Definitely from the seventeenth century is Cod. 776 of the National Library in Athens, a euchologion, and it is followed by a προσκυνητάριον written in 1757 by the Lavriote monk Makarios Trigones.¹¹

We may now consider how the Elevation was performed on each of the occasions mentioned earlier. As an illustration of the performance of the rite in times of unforeseen need, there is a story related in the sixteenth-century MS K34 which reads as follows:

Hosios Photios, the ascetic from Judaea, told us this story: Before he was baptized, he chanced to be walking with a Christian from Antioch to Jerusalem. And one night they did not reach a village but were overtaken by nightfall in an uninhabited place, and spent the night there. Hearing the cries of wild animals, they were frightened, and the Christian took it into his mind to elevate the Panaghia. And since there was no bread available, he took a small stone and elevated it in the name of the Panaghia and placed it by his pillow. And all night long the Jew could see a light burning as from a torch, luminous, on the Christian's pillow; and he was amazed at witnessing this wondrous spectacle. When they arose the next morning and reached a village, they sat down to eat; and the Jew said to the Christian, "I shall swear by your God if you will tell me the truth: What was that fire which burned the whole night long on your pillow, and where did you find it, and how did you elevate it? Tell me everything with exactness." But the Christian could not remember the incident, however much the Jew exhorted him. Finally the Christian realized that the light must have been given off by the stone which he had elevated in the name of the Panaghia. And leaving the Jew behind, he went and found the stone which had shone as a light on his pillow, and he took it, and returning he found the Jew and told him what had happened. And he showed him the stone which he had elevated. And when he saw it the Jew let out a loud cry: "Great is the God of the Christians, and great is their faith, and great is the power of the Theotokos!" And the Jew believed in Christ, as did his entire household, and they were all baptized by the most holy Patriarch of Jerusalem Hierotheos (for the Jew, too, was from Jerusalem). When therefore all of the members of his household had been baptized, he became a monk and retired to a hermitage, and mortified his flesh, and attained to virtue, and was able to heal the sick; for such grace does the Elevation of the Panaghia bestow, that its recipients are made holy. For this reason does his spiritual father order the Christian to observe the Elevation without fail; while in the event of absence from it, one must receive from one's spiritual father the appropriate penance.¹²

Concerning the performance of the rite during the Divine Liturgy, Symeon of Thessalonica noted with approval, in his *Περὶ θείας προσευχῆς*, that some priests grafted the Elevation of the Panaghia onto the service either during the office of the Prothesis or at that point when the priest intones, Ἐξαιρέτως τῆς παναγίας, and he ordered that the Elevation be performed in the principal churches of his

⁹ ΩΡΟΛΟΓΙΟΝ ΠΕΡΙΕΧΟΝ ΤΑ ΕΝ ΤΗ ΜΕΤΑ ΤΑΥΤΗΝ ΣΕΛΙΔΙ ΓΕΓΡΑΜΜΕΝΑ (Florence, 1520) (E. Le-grand, *Bibliographie hellénique, ou description raisonnée des ouvrages publiés en grec par des Grecs, aux XVe et XVIe siècles*, I [Paris, 1885], 96–97, 172; Nos. 36 and 63). MSS H15 and K34 are Nos. 670 and 1321 respectively in (Monk) Spyridon and Sophronios Eustratiades, *Catalogue of the Greek Manuscripts in the Library of the Laura on Mount Athos with Notices from Other Libraries* (Cambridge, Mass., 1925), 220–21, 260. Katholikon 81 is No. cxxxvii in Aleksej Dmitrievskij's *Opisanie liturgiĭeskikh rukopisej*, III: Τυπικά, pt. 2 (St. Petersburg, 1917), 512–15.

¹⁰ Goar, *Εὐχολόγιον*, 683.

¹¹ Panaghiotes Trempelas, *Αἱ τρεῖς λειτουργίαι κατὰ τοὺς ἐν Ἀθήναις κώδικας* (Athens, 1935), 116–17; Makarios Trigones, *Προσκυνητάριον τῆς βασιλικῆς καὶ σεβασμίας μονῆς Μεγίστης Ἀγίας Λαύρας, τοῦ Ἀγίου Ἀθανασίου τοῦ ἐν τῷ Ἀῶ* (Venice, 1772), 30–33.

¹² The translation is mine. The story bears the title, *Περὶ τῆς ὑψώσεως τῆς παναγίας*, and begins on p. ρπα'. Cf. Galavaris, *Bread and the Liturgy*, 116.

jurisdiction at every Orthros, after the ninth ode.¹³ Symeon did not cite the prayers which were to accompany the Elevation in the Liturgy. The insertion of the rite after the Ἐξαιρέτως τῆς παναγίας is suggested also by the seventeenth-century Cod. 776, which adds these prayers to the Elevation: Μακαρίζομέν σε πᾶσαι αἱ γενεαί, Ἄξιόν ἐστιν, and Τὴν πᾶσαν ἐλπίδα μου.¹⁴

For the meal preceding one's departure on a journey, the Elevation of the Panaghia is prefaced and succeeded by a number of prayers, and in the tenth-century Cod. Cryptoferratensis Γ.β. VII, as well as in later euchologia, the order is as follows: a παράκλησις; Εὐλογητὸς ὁ Θεός; Τρισάγιον; Παναγία τριάς; Πάτερ ἡμῶν; the κατανυκτικὰ τροπάρια; Ἐλέησον ἡμᾶς; Δόξα; Κύριε ἐλέησον (twelve times); Δεῦτε προσκυνήσωμεν (thrice); Psalm 50 (51); Πιστεύω εἰς ἓνα Θεόν; Ἄνες ἄφες; Πάτερ ἡμῶν; the troparia to the Theotokos which begin, Παναγία Θεοτόκε τὸν χρόνον τῆς ζωῆς μου, Ἐγὼ παρθένε, and Οὐδεὶς προστρέχων; Ἐκαστος ὅπου σώζεται; Δόξα; Νεῦσον παρακλήσεσι σῶν οἰκετῶν; Πάντων προστατεύεις, ἀγαθή; the Elevation (in this case accompanied by, Μέγα τὸ ὄνομα τῆς ἁγίας τριάδος; Παναγία, δέσποινα, Θεοτόκε βοήθει τῷ δούλῳ σου τῷ δεῖνι; and Ταῖς αὐτῆς πρεσβείαις ὁ Θεὸς ἐλέησον καὶ σῶσον ἡμᾶς); Γέγονεν ἡ κοιλία σου; Τῶν σῶν δωρεῶν; Ἄξιόν ἐστιν; Δόξα; Ἐπὶ σοὶ χαίρει, κεχαριτωμένη; Τῇ υπερμάχῳ στρατηγῷ; Τὴν πᾶσαν ἐλπίδα μου; Ἐχοντές σε Θεοτόκε; Δόξα; and Δέσποινα πρόσδεξαι. If the prospective traveller is present, the priest adds, Τοῦ κυρίου δεησώμεν and Ὁ Θεὸς ὁ Θεὸς ἡμῶν.¹⁵

Unfortunately we know nothing about the prayers that accompanied the Elevation of the Panaghia when the rite was performed in the imperial dining hall, but some information about the ritual involved is available in the mid-fourteenth century Περί τῶν ὁφικιαλίων of Pseudo-Codinus. The ceremony described therein took place directly after the Liturgy for Christmas Day. We read that the domesticus brought the bread in a container called a panaghiarion (παναγιάριον) to the emperor, who thereupon rose from his seat.¹⁶ The ἐπὶ τῆς τραπέζης elevated the Panaghia in the panaghiarion and then gave it to the domesticus, who gave it to the grand domesticus, who then handed it to the emperor. The emperor ate the particle and all those present acclaimed him with a πολυχρόνιον.¹⁷ Strictly speaking, it is not clear from this account whether the elevation of the bread was accompanied by the usual exclamations, but it is probably safe to assume that it was.

For facts about the performance of the rite after the monastic meal we can turn to several sources. Four of them—Cod. E.M.6, Symeon of Thessalonica, the Florentine horologion of 1520, and Makarios Trigones—treat the Elevation as taking place after the evening meal, the δεῖπνον. The sixteenth-century MS H15 includes the Elevation in its prayers for both meals. The "Jerusalem" liturgical typikon, exemplified by the sixteenth-century Katholikon 81 and the typikon quoted by Goar in his euchologion, prescribes a change in the Elevation for the

¹³ Migne, PG, CLV, 664, 668.

¹⁴ Trempelas, Αἱ τρεῖς λειτουργίαι, 116–7.

¹⁵ Goar, Εὐχολόγιον, 680–1.

¹⁶ For some general information about panaghiaria, see Jean Ebersolt, *Les arts somptuaires de Byzance: Etude sur l'art impérial de Constantinople* (Paris, 1923), 109–10.

¹⁷ (Pseudo-Codinus,) *Traité des Offices*, 204.

period following Easter which undoubtedly applied as well to the rite's performance outside the refectory.

The meal prayers in these sources vary somewhat in type and sequence, even when allowances are made for possible omissions. Thus, in Cod. E.M.6 the order is as follows: Εὐχαριστοῦμέν σοι Χριστέ; Κύριε ἐλέησον; Εὐλογητὸς ὁ Θεός; Δόξα σοι, . . . ὅτι ἔδωκας ἡμῖν; Δόξα; Κύριε ἐλέησον; the priest blesses the Panaghia and says, Χορηγέ τῆς ζωῆς ἡμῶν; Εὐλογεῖτε (addressed to the monks and followed by their response); the Elevation, consisting of, Μέγα τὸ ὄνομα τῆς ὁμοουσίου καὶ ἀδιαιρέτου τριάδος, Παναγία Θεοτόκε βοήθει ἡμῖν, and Ταῖς αὐταῖς (sic) πρεσβείαις ὁ Θεός ἐλέησον ἡμᾶς; Τὴν τιμιωτέραν τῶν χειρῶν; Μακαρίζομέν σε πᾶσαι αἱ γενεαί, Θεοτόκε παρθένε, ἐν σοὶ γάρ; the Panaghia is distributed and eaten, and the monks drink (wine?), saying, Πρεσβείαις τῆς παναγίας Θεοτόκου; Ἐλεήμων καὶ οἰκτήρμων; Δόξα; Ἅγιος ὁ Θεός; Δόξα; Παναγία τριάς; Κύριε ἰλάσθητι; Κύριε ἐλέησον; Δόξα; Πάτερ ἡμῶν; the ἀπολυτίκιον of the day; and Εὐλογητὸς ὁ Θεός.¹⁸

Symeon of Thessalonica gives the following: an εὐχαριστία (probably Εὐχαριστοῦμέν σοι); Πάτερ ἡμῶν; Χριστέ ὁ Θεός, εὐλόγησον; an εὐχή; Εὐλογητὸς ὁ Θεός; Δόξα σοι, . . . ὅτι ἔδωκας ἡμῖν; Δόξα; the Elevation (including Ταῖς αὐτῆς πρεσβείαις); Σὺ εἶ ὁ ὁμολογηθεὶς; Μακαρίζομέν σε πᾶσαι αἱ γενεαί, Θεοτόκε παρθένε, ἐν σοὶ γάρ; Καὶ διὰ σοῦ; and Ἄξιόν ἐστιν.¹⁹

In the horologion of 1520, the meal prayers begin with the Φάγονται πένητες of Psalm 21 (22) for the procession into the trapeza, followed by a Δόξα and the meal blessing (probably Χριστέ ὁ Θεός, εὐλόγησον). After the meal the order is as follows: Δόξα; the Elevation; Σῶσον ἡμᾶς; Γέγονεν ἡ κοιλία σου ἁγία τράπεζα, ἔχουσα; Τῶν σῶν δωρεῶν; Ἄξιόν ἐστιν; Εὐφρανas ἡμᾶς κύριε; Δόξα; and Μεθ' ἡμῶν ὁ Θεός, τῇ αὐτοῦ χάριτι.²⁰

The prayers for the evening meal in the horologion of the Lavra also begin with Φάγονται πένητες, followed by Δόξα, Κύριε ἐλέησον and a blessing (probably Χριστέ ὁ Θεός, εὐλόγησον). Then come the Elevation "κατὰ τὴν τάξιν"; Γέγονεν ἡ κοιλία σου ἁγία τράπεζα, ἔχουσα; Τὴν τιμιωτέραν τῶν χειρῶν; Εὐφρανas ἡμᾶς κύριε; and Δόξα.²¹

For the ἄριστον, the daytime meal, this same horologion gives the following: Psalm 144 (145) (Ὑψώσω σε ὁ Θεός μου); Δόξα; Κύριε ἐλέησον; a blessing (probably Χριστέ ὁ Θεός, εὐλόγησον); Δόξα; Κύριε ἐλέησον; Εὐλογητὸς ὁ Θεός; Δόξα; Κύριε ἐλέησον; Εὐλογεῖτε πατέρες ἅγιοι (addressed to the monks and followed by their response); the Elevation, consisting of, Μέγα τὸ ὄνομα τῆς ἁγίας τριάδος, Παναγία Θεοτόκε βοήθει ἡμῖν, and Τῆς (sic) αὐτῆς πρεσβείαις ὁ Θεός ἐλέησον καὶ σῶσον ἡμᾶς; Μακαρίζομέν σε πᾶσαι αἱ γενεαί, Θεοτόκε παρθένε, ἐν σοὶ γάρ; Τὴν τιμιωτέραν τῶν χειρῶν; the Panaghia is distributed; Ἐλεήμων καὶ οἰκτήρμων; Psalm 121 (122) (Εὐφράνθη ἐπὶ τοῖς εἰρηκόσιν μοι); Ἅγιος ὁ Θεός; Παναγία τριάς; Δόξα; Πάτερ ἡμῶν; (On an important feast day, the Τῇ ὑπερμάχῳ στρατηγῷ is added; on other days the monks retire to their cells and say the Εὐχαριστοῦμέν σοι Χριστέ.) Δόξα; Κύριε ἐλέησον; and Ὁ Θεός συγχωρήσοι καὶ ἐλεήσοι τοὺς ἡμᾶς διακονήσαντας.²²

¹⁸ Engdahl, *Beiträge*, 78–82.

¹⁹ Migne, PG, CLV, 665–70.

²⁰ The pages in this horologion are unnumbered. In the table of contents the relevant section is entitled, 'Ἡ μετὰ τὸν ἑσπερινὸν εὐλογία τῆς τραπέζης, καὶ πῶς δεῖ ποιεῖν.

²¹ MS H15, fols. 144r–145r.

²² *Ibid.*, fols. 116v–121v.

As I have already stated, there is a notice in some liturgical typika which prescribes a change in the Elevation of the Panaghia for the period following Easter. In the sixteenth-century Katholikon 81, we read that until the first Saturday after Easter the lifting of the bread is to be accompanied by the words, Χριστὸς ἀνέστη ἐκ νεκρῶν, pronounced three times. The response to this is, Ἀληθῶς ἀνέστη, thrice, and Προσκυνοῦμεν αὐτοῦ τὴν τριήμερον ἔγερσιν, after which the monks chant the three troparia of the eighth ode of the Resurrection Canon, beginning, Φωτίζου, φωτίζου; ὦ θείας, ὦ φίλης, ὦ γλυκυτάτης σου φωνῆς; and ὦ Πασχα τὸ μέγα.²³ The typikon consulted by Goar for his euchologion records the same change, but without mentioning the troparia, and it adds that from the Saturday after Easter until the ἀπόδοσις of the Χριστὸς ἀνέστη the exclamation Χριστὸς ἀνέστη ἐκ νεκρῶν will continue in use, but will be followed by the usual Παναγία θεοτόκε βοήθει ἡμῖν and Ταῖς αὐτῆς πρεσβείαις ὁ θεὸς ἐλέησον καὶ σῶσον ἡμᾶς. Also according to this typikon, the Panaghia is elevated on every day of the first week following Easter but is not consumed until Saturday.²⁴

These sources naturally touch only lightly, when at all, upon the visual aspects of the meal ceremonial. A detailed picture of what the ceremonial could look like is provided by the προσκυνητάριον of Makarios Trigones, written in 1757. From interior evidence it appears that the ceremony which Trigones described took place at the Great Lavra every year in celebration of the feast day of the monastery's founder, St. Athanasius the Athonite. The description is relatively modern, but it is valuable in being one of the very few graphic accounts of any date to deal with the mealtime observance of the Elevation in a monastery. Trigones goes into considerable detail. I shall confine myself to a brief paraphrase of the main sequence of events.

After Vespers, according to Trigones, the monks filed into the trapeza in prescribed order. At the head of the procession were carried the two candelabra used for the Great Entrance in the Liturgy. During this procession the precentor chanted the "troparion of the day." After all of the monks were seated, a monk chosen to act as reader recited the Φάγονται πένητες and a blessing. Then the abbot made a sign of blessing and the canonarch began declaiming the day's reading.

The monks ate in silence, and they drank their wine only upon a signal from the abbot. At meal's end the canonarch stopped reading and went to receive some food from the abbot. Then he and the τραπεζάρης took two censers and walked to where the abbot stood. At this point two ὑψώματα, each on a covered plate, were placed on the abbot's table. The reader chanted a troparion, and with all of the monks standing the τραπεζάρης elevated the Panaghia. Next the abbot blessed the censers, held now by the canonarch and a deacon, and these two monks censed the refectory, one to the left and the other to the right of the central aisle.

The τραπεζάρης and the cook cut the bread that had been elevated and distributed the pieces to all of the monks while the precentor sang a troparion. After

²³ Fol. 129r.

²⁴ Goar, Εὐχολόγιον, 683.

the bread was distributed, the officiating priest said a prayer of thanksgiving and all of those who had served in the trapeza knelt, some on one side of the central aisle and some on the other. Then, while the priest offered another prayer, the monks filed out of the refectory, led by the abbot. When the abbot stepped out he made the sign of the cross before an icon of St. Athanasius the Athonite and then crossed himself. As the other monks came out of the trapeza they did obeisance to the icon, crossed themselves in the direction of the abbot, who stood nearby, and walked to the church, where they sang Compline.²⁵

From everything stated thus far, it is obvious that the Elevation of the Panaghia is strikingly similar to the Eucharist. We may distinguish three major points of similarity: the use (including the elevation) of bread, the ceremonial surrounding the central ritual act, and the extension of the rite beyond the confines of the usual place of performance.

As mentioned earlier, the bread which is used in the Elevation of the Panaghia is sometimes the oblatory bread of the Liturgy. In modern practice, the Panaghia taken from the oblatory bread is always elevated, together with the other particles, during the Liturgy. This elevation takes place when the officiant proclaims $\tau\acute{\alpha} \sigma\acute{\alpha} \acute{\epsilon} \kappa \tau\acute{\omega} \nu \sigma\acute{\omega} \nu$. The *separate* elevation of the Panaghia during the Liturgy is optional, as we have seen. But whenever, and under whatever circumstances, it is performed, the elevation of the Panaghia is clearly imitative of the priest's elevation of the Lamb in the Liturgy. The mention in Cod. E.M. 6 of the monks' drinking immediately after their receiving the elevated bread seems to prove one instance of the inclusion of wine in the ritual. To this may be added the fact that in some present-day Orthodox communities which perform the Elevation of the Panaghia in the home wine is poured into the cavity left in the loaf by the excised Panaghia. It comes as no surprise, in view of the Elevation's morphological resemblance to the Eucharist, that some monks have been known to believe that the elevated Panaghia is actually transformed into the body of the Virgin.²⁶

The ceremonial surrounding the mealtime observance of the Elevation of the Panaghia is pervaded with practices which recall the Liturgy. Some of these practices, since we learn about them from Trigones, were probably restricted to important feast days, but others certainly were not. The panaghiarion is the Elevation's counterpart of the paten, and the $\kappa\acute{\alpha}\lambda\upsilon\mu\mu\alpha\tau\alpha$ with which Trigones says the bread was covered apparently were veils corresponding to *aëres*.²⁷ The censuring of the trapeza is similar to the censuring of the church. The reading of a

²⁵ Trigones, Προσκυνητάριον, 30–33. Trigones' description is quoted, with some minor changes, by Manuel Gedeon in his $\text{Ὁ Ἁγιὸς Ἀθανάσιος, Ἀναμνήσεις, ἔγγραφα, σημειώσεις}$ (Constantinople, 1885), 43–45.

²⁶ Trempeles, $\text{Αἱ τρεῖς λειτουργίαι}$, 117. Cf. Eduard Freiherrn von der Goltz, *Tischgebete und Abendmahlsgebete in der altchristlichen und in der griechischen Kirche*, Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur, XXIX (N.S., XIV) (Leipzig, 1905), 62.

²⁷ Some panaghiaria consist of two plates hinged together (for some Rumanian examples, see Academia Republicii Populare Române, Institutul de Istoria Artei, *Repertoriul Monumentelor și Obiectelor de Artă din Timpul lui Ștefan cel Mare* [Bucarest, 1958], figs. 242–45). But Trigones' phraseology ($\mu\acute{\epsilon} \delta\iota\sigma\kappa\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\alpha \kappa\alpha\iota \kappa\acute{\alpha}\lambda\upsilon\mu\mu\alpha\tau\alpha \epsilon\acute{\upsilon}\tau\pi\epsilon\tau\iota\sigma\mu\acute{\epsilon}\nu\alpha$) leads me to believe that he was referring not to this kind of panaghiarion, but to plates covered with cloths. Κάλυμμα usually refers to a veil used to cover either a paten, a chalice, or both: see Léon Clugnet, *Dictionnaire grec-français des noms liturgiques en usage dans l'église grecque* (Paris, 1895), 72.

spiritual text in the refectory (which text, incidentally, is often the repetition or the continuation of a reading begun in church during the Orthros²⁸) calls to mind the readings of the Liturgy. The distribution of the bread after the Elevation of the Panaghia resembles the distribution of the ἀντίδωρον after the Liturgy. The typikon's substitution of a Resurrection formula for the usual exclamations in the period after Easter corresponds to a similar substitution in the Liturgy.

Finally, the extension of the Elevation of the Panaghia beyond the trapeza, as in the case of a meal preceding a journey, is analogous to the administration of the Eucharist outside of the church in time of need. The story of Hosios Photios, quoted earlier, witnesses to the fact that the Panaghia, like the Eucharistic elements, was believed to be efficacious even when abstracted from any form of corporate worship.

How are these similarities between the Elevation of the Panaghia and the Eucharist to be explained? Some of them are, no doubt, instances of the imitation of the latter rite by the former. The censuring of the trapeza, for example, needs no other explanation than the censuring of the church. The use of bread in both of the rites, however, poses a more interesting problem. To what extent might this similarity be due to a common origin, rather than to imitation?

The problem of the origin of the Elevation of the Panaghia must have aroused someone's interest centuries ago, because the Florentine horologion of 1520 includes a chapter entitled, "Concerning the Elevation of the Panaghia: How It Occurred and Why."²⁹ This tale appears in later horologia as well, sometimes with a different title or even none at all.³⁰ I translate it as follows:

After the awesome resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ and the descent of the Holy Spirit, and until the time when the holy apostles dispersed to preach the gospel, all of the apostles were of one accord. And in reclining after the blessing at the ἄριστον, they would leave a place vacant, and put there a cushion, and on the cushion a piece of bread, from which they would eat in memory of Christ. After the ἄριστον they would stand, say the blessings and prayers, take the piece of bread dedicated to Christ's memory, lift it up, and say Δόξα σοι ὁ Θεὸς ἡμῶν, δόξα σοι. Δόξα πατρὶ καὶ υἱῷ καὶ ἁγίῳ πνεύματι. And instead of Μέγα τὸ ὄνομα, they would say [from Easter] until the Ascension, Χριστὸς ἀνέστη, and after the Ascension had passed, Μέγα τὸ ὄνομα τῆς ἁγίας τριάδος. Κύριε Ἰησοῦ Χριστέ βοήθει ἡμῖν. And that is how it was done. And each apostle, wherever he happened to be [after the dispersion], performed this act until the Dormition of the Theotokos, at which time the apostles assembled from all over the world, transported on clouds, for the Assumption of Our Lady the Theotokos. And they performed the aforementioned after her entombment—on the third day, to be precise—and when the ἄριστον was ended they stood, and, as was customary, elevated the bread set aside for Christ, and began uttering, Μέγα τὸ ὄνομα, when—O, wondrous miracle!—the deceased appeared, as if alive, high in the air, among the clouds, and flanked by luminous angels; and she said, Χαίρετε, ὅτι μεθ' ὑμῶν εἰμι πάσας τὰς ἡμέρας, thus conveying to them the gladsome tidings she had received from the Son. The dis-

²⁸ In Katholikon 81, the entries of which are typical in this respect, three of the ten trapeza readings explicitly named (December 29, January 20, January 22; fols. 41^r, 49^r, and 49^v) are also referred to as having been begun in church.

²⁹ Περὶ τῆς ὑψώσεως τῆς παναγίας, ὅπως γέγονε, καὶ διατί.

³⁰ E.g., Ὡρολόγιον τὸ μέγα, ed. Bartholomew of Koutloumoussi (Venice, 1838), 121. The story has been translated into Latin (Goar, Εὐχολόγιον, 683) and French (M. Jugie, *La Mort et l'assomption de la sainte Vierge: Etude historico-doctrinale*, Studi e Testi, No. 114 [Vatican City, 1944], 351–52).

ciples, dumbfounded by the miracle, instead of saying Κύριε Ἰησοῦ Χριστέ [βοήθει ἡμῖν], cried Παναγία θεοτόκε βοήθει ἡμῖν! Going next to the tomb, and not finding there her all-holy body, they became truly convinced that, having risen bodily from the dead after three days, in the manner of her Son, she had been taken up into the heavens, to reign with Christ unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Jugie considers this account to be an invention of "relatively recent" date.³¹ It was certainly in circulation by the second half of the fifteenth century, for it appears illustrated on a liturgical textile of that date in the Rumanian monastery of Putna, in a scene which has been mistakenly identified as a Communion of the Apostles.³² Symeon of Thessalonica did not refer to the story in his discussion of the Elevation of the Panaghia, although he made clear his belief that the rite was of apostolic origin.³³ His failure to mention the horologion's story lends some weight to the suspicion that in his day it was unknown, or at best only nascent. On the other hand, the story may represent the survival of a very old tradition.

Von der Goltz remarked many years ago that the apostolic meal described in the horologion has the characteristics of an early Eucharistic ceremony incorporating Jewish meal customs. The piece of bread set aside for Christ in the story has its prototype in the Jewish Passover meal, in the piece of bread which is placed under a cushion until the end of the meal and then broken and distributed among those present. The place reserved for Christ has its model in the seat which in Jewish meal practice is reserved for Elijah. That much of the story is convincing, and so, according to Von der Goltz, is the alleged shift of emphasis from Christ to the Virgin in the meal ceremony. "Naiver hätte die Überlieferung die Verdrängung Christi durch Maria nicht eingestehen können," he wrote, but he believed that the monastic meal prayers recorded by Symeon of Thessalonica and the horologion prove that a shift of emphasis did occur. For example, the Σὺ εἶ ὁ ὁμολογηθεὶς which follows the invocation of the Virgin in Symeon's account of the Elevation of the Panaghia *would* more logically follow the Κύριε Ἰησοῦ Χριστέ βοήθει ἡμῖν mentioned by the horologion as constituting the original invocation.³⁴

If Von der Goltz was correct, the Elevation of the Panaghia was originally a Eucharistic ceremony which ceased to be Christocentric and became instead a rite honoring the Virgin. Since he wrote his study a theory has been advanced concerning the relationship between the Eucharist and the agape which nicely supplements Von der Goltz's view. Gregory Dix has argued that the agape was not a Eucharistic ceremony retaining all of the elements of the Lord's Supper, but was that part of the Lord's Supper which remained after the Eucharist was extracted. He dates the bifurcation to the late first or early second century.³⁵ Was this "devaluation" of an early Christian Eucharistic meal the event which

³¹ *Ibid.*, 352.

³² The textile was first published by O. Tafrali in his *Le trésor byzantin et roumain du monastère de Poutna* (Paris, 1925), pl. xli (no. 87) and 50–51.

³³ Migne, PG, CLV, 664.

³⁴ Von der Goltz, *Tischgebete*, 62–65.

³⁵ Gregory Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy* (Westminster, Eng., 1945), 96ff.

led to the rite which is known today as the Elevation of the Panaghia? Perhaps the Panaghia was used from that point on—not necessarily elevated, but at least consumed—in place of the “lost” Lamb.

We know that the agape continued to involve the blessing and breaking of bread after the extraction of the Eucharist.³⁶ We also know that the agape was being celebrated domestically by ascetics in Egypt in the early fourth century, which is to say, at or very near the time when coenobitic monasticism made its appearance (*ca.* 320).³⁷ The agape could have served as the model for the “common table” of the coenobia, which would explain why the Elevation of the Panaghia has been more closely associated with the monastic meal than with any other occasion.³⁸ Finally, the symbolic connection drawn by Symeon of Thessalonica between the pyramidal shape of the Panaghia and the Virgin’s mission is a strained one. It is easier to believe that the pyramidal particle was not initially linked with the Theotokos but was purely and simply a symbol of the Trinity, intended for use in the Eucharist. The attachment of Marian symbolism to the particle may have been a process analogous to the attachment of a Marian invocation to the meal prayers that had accompanied the celebration of the Eucharist.

May we posit an organic continuity between the early Eucharistic meal ceremony and the Elevation of the Panaghia (in which case the latter rite must be seen as an attempt to preserve Eucharistic usage in a “devalued” meal ceremony), or must we, rather, consider the Elevation of the Panaghia to have been a later innovation, designed to solemnize the monastic meal by endowing it with a Eucharistic form? I consider the first hypothesis to be the more plausible. However, an examination of liturgical books and other sources older than those to which I have had access would be necessary to close the chronological gap between the first recorded appearances of the agape and the Cod. Cryptoferratensis Γ.β. VII. Certainly the task does not promise to be an easy one. The literary and archaeological evidence relating to the incorporation of Marian elements into the symbolism both of the eulogia bread and of the Eucharistic bread is full of ambiguities. For example, what sort of causal connection existed between the notion that the oblatory loaf was symbolic of the Virgin’s body (an idea contained in the ἱστορία ἐκκλησιαστική, as we have seen) and the fact that the bread for the Elevation of the Panaghia is sometimes cut from the oblatory loaf?

Ambiguity is often a part of the very nature of such things, to the great frustration of the positivistic historian. But, however difficult it may be to isolate the facts and fix them in their true sequence, the effort must be made if the history of the Elevation of the Panaghia is to be less of a mystery for the student of Eastern Christian worship.

³⁶ Galavaris, *Bread and the Liturgy*, 111, where there is also reference to the primary sources.

³⁷ Von der Goltz, *Tischgebete*, 31–37; Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy*, 93.

³⁸ Symeon of Thessalonica wrote that the Panaghia “τέτακται μὲν ἐξαίρετως ὑποῦσθαι ἐν τῷ τέλει τῆς τραπέζης τῶν ἀδελφῶν” (spacing mine): Migne, PG, CLV, 661.